

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAIRO 17325 191220Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----109973 191224Z /53

O P 191114Z OCT 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 645
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NY PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

S E C R E T CAIRO 17325

EXDIS TREAT AS NODIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, MOPS, PBOR, IS, LE, XF
SUBJ:;SOUTH LEBANON PROBLEM

REF STATE 250648,

1. IN ABBREVIATED MEETING WITH FAHMY THIS MORNING, I RAISED WITH HIM IMPORTANCE OF EXECUTING FINAL STAGES OF SHTAURA AGREEMENT CALLING FOR MAJOR THINNING OUT AND WITHDRAWAL OF PALESTINIAN FORCES IN SOUTH LEBANON AND NEAR SIMULTANEOUS INTRODUCTION OF LEBANESE ARMY UNITS. SINCE WE HAVE NOT OFTEN DISCUSSED MATTER WITH EGYPTIANS (ALTHOUGH GHEY ARE FULLY AWARE OF SITUATION), I GAVE HIM BACKGROUND OF OUR EFFORTS TO DEFUSE SOUTH LEBANON SITUATION AND WENT THROUGH POINTS CITED PARA 1 REFTEL, EMPHASIZING OUR SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO OBTAIN ISRAELI AGREEMENT NOT TO INTERFERE WITH SHTAURA AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION DESPITE CONTINUING ISRAELI DISTRUST

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OF PALESTINIAN GOOD FAITH. SAID I DID NOT KNOW HOW MUCH OF A ROLE EGYPT HAD PLAYED IN FACILITATING SHTAURA AGREEMENT, BUT URGED THAT GOE NOW DO WHAT IT CAN TO PERSUADE PLO/FATAH LEADERSHIP TO COOPERATE WITH SHARKIS GOVT IN ORDER TO BRING REJECTIONISTS UNDER CONTROL AND IMPLEMENT FINAL PHASES OF SHTAURA AGREEMENT.

2. FAHMY NOTED ARAFAT HAD JUST BEEN HERE PAST TWO DAYS. WHILE SOUTH LEBANON HAD NOT BEEN PRINCIPAL SUBJECT DISCUSSED, ARAFAT HAD ASSURED EGYPTIANS THAT SHTAURA AGREEMENT WILL BE HONORED IF ISRAELIS DOD NOT INTERFERE. FAHMY CALIMED IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT A DIFFERENCE OF VIEW EXISTS BETWEEN LEBANESE GOVT AND PLO LEADERSHIP ABOUT PALESTINIAN WITHDRAWAL. PALESTINIANS WISH TO DO SO IN STAGES AND THIS HAD EARLIER BEEN ACCEPTED BY LEBANESE GOVT. NOW, HOWEVER, LEBANESE GOVT WISHES PALESTINIANS WITHDRAW IN ONE STEP BEFORE INTRODUCING LEBANESE TROOPS. HE WAS SURE THIS COULD BE WORKED OUT BETWEEN LEBANESE AND PLO.

3. FAHMY WAS CLEARLY RELUCTANT TO INTERFERE (PERHAPS BECAUSE HE IS AWARE OF LIMITED EGYPTIAN CAPABILITY INFLUENCE SITUATION), BUT ASKED IF WE HAVE ANY INFO ABOUT THAT THE ISRAELIS INTEND TO ATTACK PALESTINIANS IN SOUTH LEBANON AGAIN. TOLD HIM WE HAVE NO SUCH INFO, BUT UNLESS PERSISTENT PATTERN OF VIOLATIONS OF CEASEFURE WHICH HAS CHARACEERIZED SOUTH LEBANON SITUATION IS CORRECTED, ONE CANNOT RULE OUT POSSIBILITY THAT ISRAEL WILL BE GOADED INTO MILITARY COUNTER-MEASURES. IT IS IMPORTANT, THEREFORE, THAT EGYPT JOIN OTHER ARAB STATES IN DOING WHAT IT CAN TO REDUCE SOUTH LEBANON TENSIONS AND TO PRESS PLO TO HONOR SHTAURA GREEMENT. WE HAVE DONE OUR PART, NOW IT IS UP TO ARABS TO DO THEIRS.

4. SOMEWHAT RELUCTANTLY, FAHMY SAID HE WOULD CHECK TO SEE
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IF ARAFAT IS STILL HERE AND, IF SO, WOULD DISCUSS MATTER WITH HIM. (THIS MORNING'S PAPER SAYS ARAFAT IS LEAVING FOR DAMASCUS TODAY). IF ARAFAT HAS ALREADY GONE, FAHMY SAID HE WILL CONSIDER WHAT GOE MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO TO HELP.

5. COMMENT: IN ADDITION TO LIMITED INFLUENCE ON SOUTH LEBANON SITUATION, FAHMY IS RELUCTANT TO APPEAR TO BE PRESSING PLO LEADERSHIP AT THIS TIME. AS RESULT RECENT TALKS WITH ARAFAT, HE BELIEVES NEW SCHISMS HAVE DEVELOPED BETWEEN PLO LEADERSHIP AND SYRIANS AND THAT FORMER ARE AGAIN LEANING TOWARD EGYPT, ESPECIALLY WITH RESPECT TO MOVEMENT TOWARD GENEVA. HIS JUDGMENT MAY BE RIGHT OR WRONG, BUT IT CLEARLY INFLUENCES EXTENT TO WHICH HE IS WILLING TO WEIGHT IN TO PRESS PLO LEADERSHIP TO WITHDRAW FROM SOUTH LEBANON.

6. WILL FOLLOW UP AS APPROPRIATE.
EILTS

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGREEMENTS, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, MEETINGS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MUTUAL FORCE REDUCTIONS, CAT-B
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 19-Oct-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CAIRO17325
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: EXDIS TREAT AS NODIS
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P850052-1929
Format: TEL
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771045/aaaablrf.tel
Line Count: 111
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: bbeba52c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, EXDIS
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, EXDIS
Reference: 77 STATE 250648
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 867311
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOUTH LEBANON PROBLEM
TAGS: MILI, MOPS, PBOR, IS, LE, XF, (FAHMY)
To: STATE AMMAN MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/bbeba52c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009